

Appl. No. 10/664,260
Response dated May 11, 2007
Reply to Office Action of February 12, 2007

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-22 are presented for Examiner Hand's consideration.

By way of the Office Action mailed February 12, 2007, Examiner Hand rejected claims 1 – 22 under 35 U.S.C. § 103 as being obvious over U.S. Patent Number 6,608,236 to Burnes et al. in view of U.S Patent Application Publication Number 2003/0097109 to Bruce et al. We respectfully disagree.

Burnes et al. discloses recited components of a personal care product. Bruce et al. is directed to a system for selecting feminine hygiene products. These products are selected by panty style. (See Abstract.) For certain styles, such as a thong, the feminine hygiene product may have a shape adapted to fit these panty styles. Nowhere, however, does Bruce et al., alone or in combination with Burnes et al., disclose, teach, or suggest the inventive elements of our asymmetric multilayer absorbent article.

Claim 1 in our application recites the presence of an intake layer, with the intake layer "longitudinally offset toward an article region which is delimited by said first half of the shaping layer." Burnes et al. teaches that absorbent articles comprise an absorbent core, with *optional* addition of a topsheet, backsheet, side wrapping elements, etc. (Col. 3, paragraph 34.) Thus Burnes et al. explicitly teaches using an absorbent core, alone, without any other component. Furthermore, Burnes et al.'s preferred embodiment is an absorbent core made of foam that absorbs liquids and moves them to other regions of the foam. (Id., paragraph 37.) In other words, a person of ordinary skill, reading Burnes et al., is led to employ the fewest materials possible in the purportedly inventive system. Burnes et al., gives little, if any, detail on the structure of individual articles in the disclosed arrays. Certainly a person of ordinary skill, reading this reference, is not led to employ a more sophisticated, multi-component article with at least one component, such as an intake layer, offset from other components along the length of the article.

Combining Burnes et al. with Bruce et al. does not change the above analysis. First of all, it's not immediately evident that a person of ordinary skill would combine the references. Again, Bruce et al. is directed to a purportedly inventive system,

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with little detail on construction of articles—and in fact emphasizing simple constructions with few materials. Burnes et al. is directed to a stabilized absorbent material in multi-component, personal care products. Even if the references are combined, nowhere is a person of ordinary skill led to longitudinally offset the location of an intake layer relative to other components. Accordingly, we respectfully request that the obviousness rejection be withdrawn and the claims allowed.

Please charge any prosecutorial fees which are due to Kimberly-Clark Worldwide, Inc. deposit account number 11-0875.

The undersigned may be reached at: 920-721-2747.

Respectfully submitted,
KRAUTKRAMER ET AL.

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CERTIFICATE OF TRANSMISSION

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